

Remarks

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 14, 15, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,821,895 to Lin et al. ("Lin"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection for the following reasons.

Lin has an earliest effective date of February 20, 2003. However, the invention date of the subject matters of claims 1, 2, 4-7, 14, 15, and 18 precedes that date as evidenced by the attached declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131, along with photocopies of the supporting documents that are provided herewith. In particular, the declaration along with the photocopies of the supporting documents show that the subject matters of claims 1, 2, 4-7, 14, 15, and 18 have a conception date at least as early as September 20, 2002, and subsequent diligence beginning at least prior to the earliest effective date of *Lin* (February 20, 2003) until filing of the subject patent application on January 22, 2004. Therefore, the invention date of the subject matters of claims 1, 2, 4-7, 14, 15, and 18 predates the effective date of *Lin*. For at least this reason, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 14, 15, and 18 are patentable over *Lin*.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Lin*. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The subject matter of claim 3, as well as its base claim, claim 1, predates the effective date of *Lin*. For at least this reason, claim 3 is patentable over *Lin*.

The Examiner rejected claims 8, 16, and 17 under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Lin* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,722,943 to Michael J. Joslyn ("Joslyn"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The subject matters of claims 8, 16, and 17 predate the effective date of *Lin*. For at least this reason, claims 8, 16, and 17 are patentable over *Lin* in view of *Joslyn*.

The Examiner rejected claims 9-13 under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Lin* in view of *Joslyn* and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,843,709 to Crkvenac et al. ("Crkvenac"). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The subject matters of claims 9-17 predate the effective date of *Lin*. For at least this reason, claims 9-17 are patentable over *Lin* in view of *Joslyn* and in further view of *Crkvenac*.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-18 are in condition for allowance. Early issuance of Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

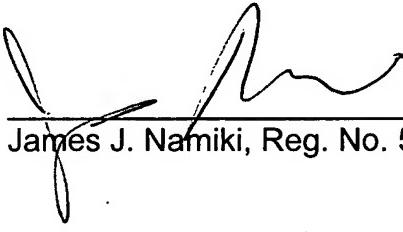
If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned at 503-796-2099.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge shortages or credit overpayments to Deposit Account No. 500393.

Respectfully submitted,
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